

ADULT LEARNING OVERVIEW

Adult Learning Overview

Introduction

Over the next hour we will discuss adult learners. We are going to explore how adults learn by discovering the characteristics of the adult learner, identifying the different learning styles, and examining how adults learn and what motivates them. We will also see how you can affect the motivation of your students to learn by how you present material and how you treat your students.

Importance

How well do you think you know someone? In the space provided, write 3-5 things about yourself. However, you should write 1 thing that is not true. Brief the other members of your group without telling them which one is not true. See if your first impression gives it away.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

As you can see by your fellow students' responses, you all possess different experiences and characteristics that influenced how you related to this exercise. People relate in a number of different ways; based on experiences, relevance of the material, interest, and level of motivation. As instructors, understanding what motivates your students to learn will enable you to effectively train them.

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Learning Objectives

This is a lesson purpose class. There are no learning objectives.

Adult Learning Overview (Cont)

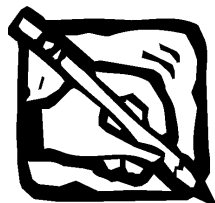
In this Lesson

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Skills Check

What are some things that you can think of that make adult learners different from young learners? You have one minute to write down as many answers as you can.



Teaching Approach Different For Adults

Introduction

The approach to instruction differs depending on the population. Of course, the population that you teach is adults. By contrasting teaching children with teaching adults, you should acquire a better understanding of the different considerations that should be taken when teaching adults.



Item	Description
Pedagogy	<p>Pedagogy literally means the art and science of teaching children. The pedagogical model assigns to the teacher full responsibility for making all decisions about:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">what will be learnedhow it will be learnedwhen it will be learnedif it has been learned. <p>It is teacher-directed education, leaving to the learner only the submissive role of following a teacher's instruction.</p>
Andragogy	<p>Andragogy means the teaching of adults. The andragogical model focuses on the education of adults and is based on the following precepts:</p> <p>Adults</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">need to know why they need to learn somethingmaintain the concept of responsibility for their own decisionsenter the educational activity with an increased level of experiencehave a readiness to learn those things that they need to know in order to cope effectively with real-life situationsare motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situationsare more responsive to internal motivators than external motivators.

Adult Learning Characteristics

Description

There has been little research on educating adults until the end of World War I. During this era and since, a growing body of assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners has developed.

There are seven characteristics that generally define adult learners.



Characteristics
Independent Self-Concept
Motivated to Learn Useful Information
Establish Emotional Framework
Previous Learning
Small Group
Supporting and Challenging Environment
Learning Environment

Independent Self-Concept

Adults avoid, resist, and resent situations where they are not treated as adults. As an adult, there is a need to be treated by others as capable of self-direction.

Motivated to Learn Useful Information

Adult's motivation to learn increases when they understand why they need to learn new information and skills. They need to know why it is important to them, what they can anticipate on learning, and how they will learn it. Adults are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations.

Adult Learning Characteristics (cont)

Established Emotional Frameworks

An adult's ability to learn is directly proportional to the degree of emotional safety he or she feels. Anxiety, fear, and lack of confidence are all feelings that can negatively affect one's motivation and willingness to learn.

Previous Learning

Adults possess a large bank of previous learning. Previous learning can either be a help or a hindrance to the individual.

Small Groups

Research of adult learning has shown that most adults learn best in small groups. This makes students responsible not only for their own learning, but for the learning of the group. Students who grasp concepts faster help those who don't, and the collective experience of the group adds to the process of learning.

Supporting and Challenging Environment

Adults will tend to "shut down" in a non-supportive environment. Being criticized by an instructor in a manner that offends is a sure way to stop the learning process. Also, when instruction does not provide a challenge, learning slows or stops. Imagine a college level English course beginning with a review of the alphabet. Would that be challenging? Hardly so. In fact, students might not attend another class when faced with a lack of challenging objectives.



Adult Learning Characteristics (cont)

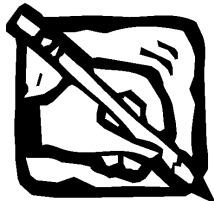
Learning Environment



Adults learn best under the same conditions and using the same procedures as they would on the job.

Item	Conditions
1	Many learners require interaction with the instructor and other students to learn the course material.
2	Adult learners are autonomous and self-directing.
3	Individual differences among people increase with age. As adults age, their experience-base broadens and shapes them.

Skills Check



Write a short description of a class you have attended that did not consider adult learning characteristics. You have three minutes writing time. Be prepared to share your experience with the class and determine which principle was violated that caused the student to resist learning.

Learning Styles

Description

A learning style refers to individuals' characteristic and *preferred* ways of gathering, interpreting, organizing, and thinking about information. There are at least sixteen models of learning styles and 20 cognitive dimensions that have been postulated. Within this class, we will only address a basic model.

⇒ Instructional Preference Model
⇒ Accommodating Different Learning Styles
⇒ Cone of Learning

Focuses on the medium in which learning occurs.

Instructional Preference Model

Item	Definition
1	Those who tend to learn better when they can see it.
2	Those who tend to learn better when they hear it.
3	Those who tend to learn better by doing it.

At this time take out your completed Learning Style Inventory.

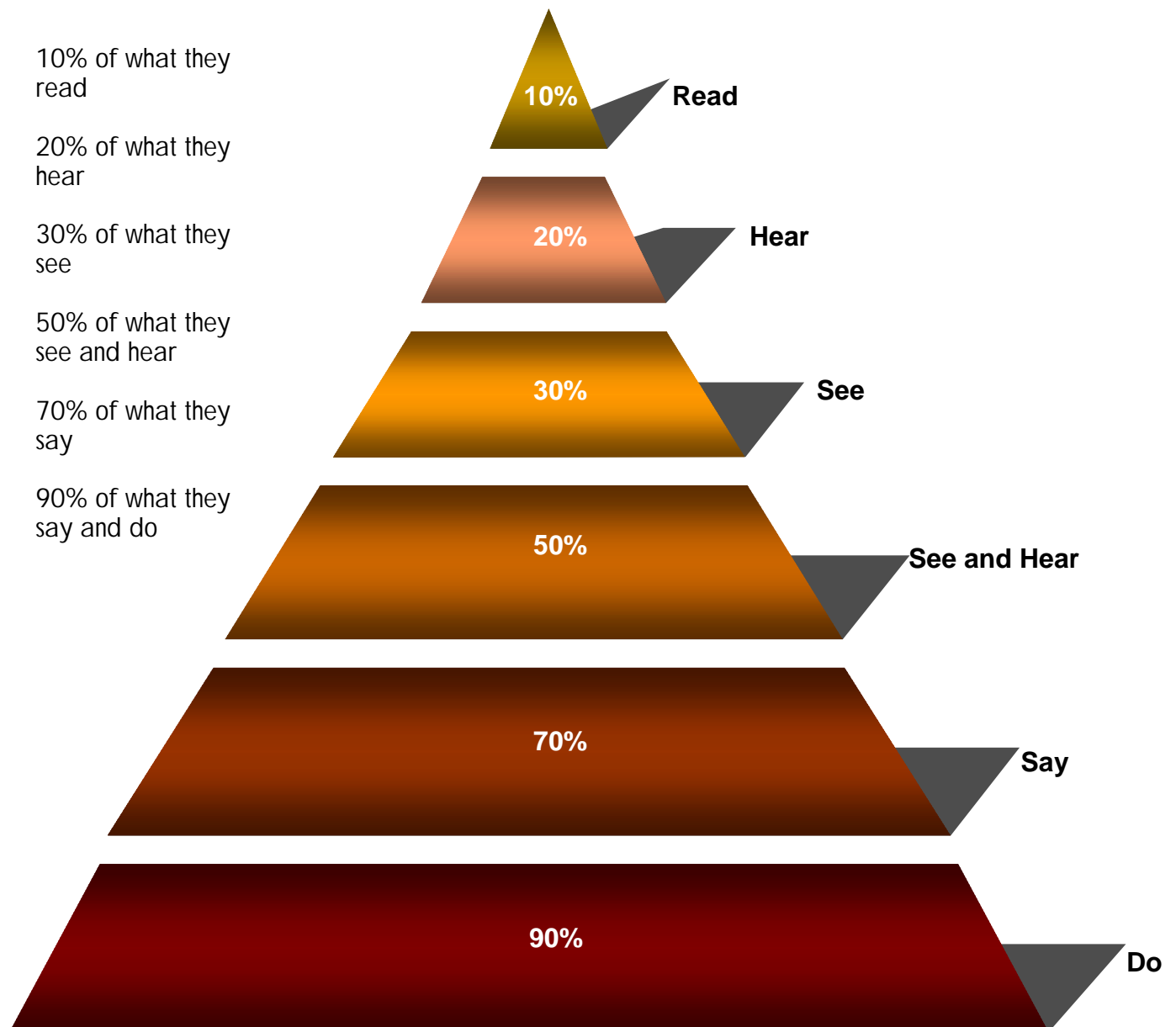
Accommodating Different Learning Styles

1. Recognize your own style and how it influences the way you teach.
 2. Encourage students to value different learning styles and orientations.
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Learning Styles (cont)

Cone of Learning

Overall, adults tend to learn more when the learning is active. Studies show that after two weeks, we tend to remember (Ref. Effective Teaching Workshop: *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching* 3rd Edition):



How Adults Learn

Description In order to provide better instruction for your students, you must understand how they learn. Three stages occur in the learning process that ensure a successful transfer of knowledge. They are:

- ⇒ putting the task into context
- ⇒ dividing it into manageable chunks
- ⇒ allowing for practice.

Context It is very important to let your students know the “big picture” when they begin to learn. Let the student know how the task fits into the job as a whole, then get to the details. This simple process orients the student to the learning, shows relevance and prepares your student to learn.

Manageable Chunks Cutting your material into manageable chunks means breaking the instruction into small, logical pieces. For each piece, it also means identifying the critical points. Before moving from one chunk to the next, make sure your students understand what has been taught.

Practice As we will see a bit later in this lesson, the best way to learn how to do something . . . is to do it. Once you have introduced your students to a new concept or task, allow them time to practice. As they practice, you can coach them, correcting misunderstandings, and pointing out their successes. Following this process produces very good results:



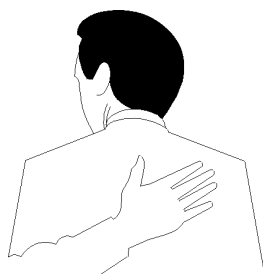
Process
Show the task at full speed
Show the task slowly
Allow the students to perform the task with you
Allow the students to do the task on their own

➤ *I do it fast, I do it slow, you do it with me – now you go.*

Motivating Student's To Learn

Description

For learning to be effective, your students must be motivated to learn. There exists a shared responsibility for motivation between the instructor and the student. The learner controls the desire to learn, and the instructor controls the stimulation. Let's look at what you can do as an instructor to stimulate that motivation in your students:



Techniques	Definition
Give Recognition	When students do something worthy of recognition, instructors need to give positive feedback to the student. Such recognition makes the student feel alive, important, and significant.
Serve as a good role-model	As an instructor you will have a considerable influence on your student's motivation, thru the example you give. Show them the proper way to complete a task, wear a uniform, or treat students to <i>PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH</i> . Research indicates that teachers with low self-concepts tend to have students in their classroom with lower self-concepts, and vice-versa.
Stimulate Cooperation among Students	Modern society places a lot of emphasis on competition. While competition with the self can lead to improved performance as students strive to do their best, competition against others can result in negative perceptions of the self especially if it isolates a person. With cooperation, everyone can experience the success of the group, and no one is viewed as the winner or loser.
Consider Mastery Learning	Mastery is defined in terms of a specific set of major objectives that students are expected to exhibit by subject completion. Using this approach, a student's performance is measured against objectives rather than against the performance of other students. The instructor fixes the degree of learning expected of students at some mastery level and allows time for learning to vary, so all or almost all students achieve the desired level of mastery.
Reasonable Expectation	There is a considerable amount of research that suggests that students perform up to the expectations that instructors have for them. Students grow, flourish, and develop better in a relationship with someone who projects an inherent trust and belief in their capacity to become what they have the potential to become.
Recognize Potential	Behavioral scientists have concluded that, human's function at 10 percent or less of their potential. Negative self-concepts certainly stand in the way of releasing the potential of students. So the next time you have students who tell you they can't, tell them that they can, and even if you suspect they can't, tell them they can; then who knows, they just might.

Domains of Learning

Description

The three domains of learning are used as a frame of reference for planning instruction and understanding the range of possible learning outcomes. The three domains of learning are:

- ⇒ **Cognitive**
- ⇒ **Affective**
- ⇒ **Psychomotor**



The domain that is used most often is the cognitive domain; also referred to as Bloom's Taxonomy. Each domain is divided into different levels of learning. There are higher and lower levels. Depending on who your target population is determines the level of instruction used to achieve anticipated outcomes or objectives. For the lessons you will teach, it is good to familiarize yourself with whether the anticipated outcome is higher order or lower order.

Cognitive Domain (Blooms)

The first domain we will discuss is the cognitive domain. Cognitive learning is demonstrated by recall of knowledge and other intellectual skills such as organizing ideas, applying knowledge, comprehending information, problem solving, organizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating ideas or actions.

Affective Domain (Krathwohl & Blooms)

The second domain we will discuss is the affective domain. The affective domain is used if the purpose is to change **attitudes and/or behaviors**. The affective domain of learning deals with learning objectives on an emotional level, to include feelings, appreciation, enthusiasm, attitudes, and motivations.

Psychomotor Domain (Simpson, Harrow & Simpson)

The psychomotor domain includes physical movement, coordination, and mental skills such as speaking.

Domains of Learning (cont)

An easy way to remember these three domains are to use the acronym ASK. This stands for:

ATTITUDES (affective domain)

SKILLS (psychomotor domain)

KNOWLEDGE (cognitive domain)



The young man taught all he knew and more;
The middle-aged man taught all he knew;
The old man taught all that his students could understand.

Arnold Ross

References

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Notes

